OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

HIGHLIGHTS

December 19, 2011

Integrating Sustainable Energy in Facilities

Report Number DA-MA-12-001

IMPACT ON:

U.S. Postal Service Facility Energy Management and Sustainability

WHY THE OIG DID THE AUDIT:

Our objective was to identify opportunities for the Postal Service to use state-of-the-art alternative energy technologies at its facilities.

WHAT THE OIG FOUND:

We found that the Postal Service has not measured the performance of currently installed alternative energy systems. As the Postal Service continues to explore alternative energy technologies it needs to ensure that performance metrics for assessing success are established.

We also found that additional alternative energy projects might not be economically viable for the Postal Service at this time, because alternative energy is currently more costly than energy generated by nuclear or fossil fuel sources. Also, the Postal Service is facing many challenges in today's environment including rightsizing its network and limited capital funding. However, there might be future opportunities to integrate state-of-the-art alternative energy technologies to provide potential savings and other benefits. These opportunities could exist for those facilities owned by the Postal Service where there is a long-term commitment to retain the property.

WHAT THE OIG RECOMMENDED:

We recommended the vice president, Facilities and the chief sustainability officer, establish and monitor performance metrics for any new alternative energy systems and continue to monitor opportunities and economic feasibilities for additional systems.

WHAT MANAGEMENT SAID:

Management agreed with the recommendations and will establish and monitor performance metrics on any new alternative energy system. Management will also continue to investigate future opportunities that provide a good return on investment in a reasonable timeframe while also considering budget limitations and facility optimization efforts.

AUDITORS' COMMENTS:

Management's comments are responsive to the recommendations in the report.